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# Needed money, says soldier who sold secrets to Soviets

Jacksonville, Fla. (UPI)—Joseph George Helmich Jr., the former Army warrant officer who admitted spying for Moscow, said yesterday "my weakness was poor money management aggravated by excessive drinking."

In a statement issued by his lawyer, Peter M. Dearing, Helmich said his espionage career was spawned by his debts.

"I was in desperate need of \$500 to \$600 as my wallet had been stolen and my entire month's pay with it."

He said he only intended his crime to be "a one-time thing," but the Soviets wouldn't let him quit.

He said his commanding officer had given him "an ultimatum" to make good on some bounced checks or face a court-martial.

"Granted, it was naive on my part, but I decided to get that money the only way I felt I could—from the Soviets. My intent was a one-time

thing—get the \$500 or \$600 and get out," he said.

"I very quickly learned just how naive I was," Helmich said. "If anyone for any reason approaches, or is approached by, the Soviets and is in any way vulnerable or in a position they covet, that person is never allowed out as long as they can be of use."

HELMICH, 44, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to sell to the Soviets for \$131,000 a maintenance manual, technical details and key lists for the KL-7 Cryptosystem, a top-secret coding device, while he was stationed during 1963-64 at an Army communications relay station in Paris.

Testimony last week at Helmich's federal espionage trial showed he spent the money the Soviets paid him on two Jaguar sports cars, caviar and fine wine, Christian Dior dresses, a \$3,000 diamond ring and furs for his wife, and a new three-bedroom house.



Joseph G. Helmich—says money, drink led him to Russians.